DC #15

DIRECT CURRENTS

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five-issue mini-series

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THE GREATEST SUPERMAN STORIES EVER TOLD
trade paperback

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trade paperback

HAWK & DOVE
ongoing monthly series

SKREEMER
six-issue mini-series

PLUS...
An interview with Mike Grell

Cover Of The Month
WONDER WOMAN #31

THE WORLD OF *SKREEMER* ...AFTER THE FALL

The era of Veto Skreemer will be a lot like today . . . only scarier.

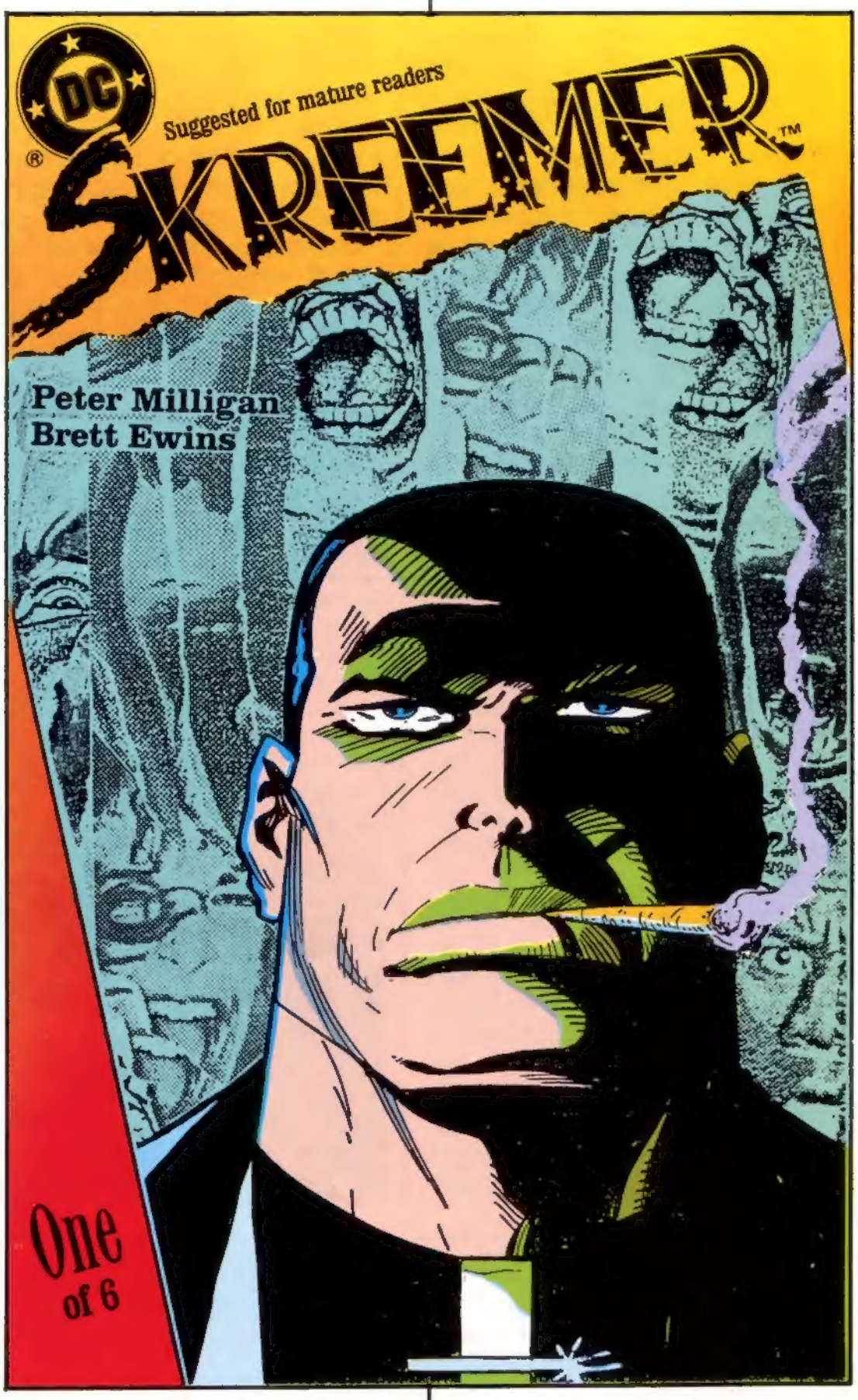
In the days after the fall of Western civilization a new order will rise, one dominated by the ruthless "Presidents" of mob-style gangsters.

Set in the devastated world of the near future, **SKREEMER** is the story of chaos and violence . . . a world where history has begun to repeat itself . . . a world where only the strong have any hope for survival. VETO SKREEMER is such a man. He has a remarkable gift . . . and a terrible curse.

VETO SKREEMER was born on the very day that civilization died.

SKREEMER is a hard-edged, fast-paced series that is at times realistic, at times over the edge of surrealism. A six-issue mini-series in the Deluxe Format, SKREEMER is written by Peter Milligan and drawn by Brett Ewins and is labelled "Suggested for Mature Readers."

SKREEMER, where the future has arrived . . . and it's not a pretty story.



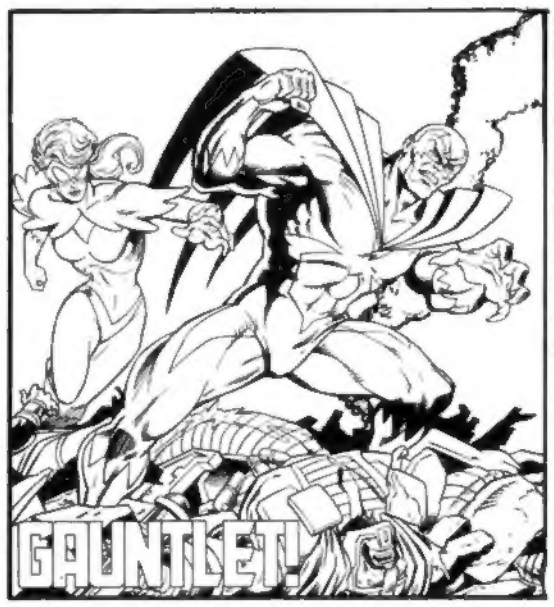
HAWK AND DOVE RETURN

When his brother, the original DOVE, died, HAWK believed he would be continuing his crime-fighting career as a solo hero.

He was wrong.

Now, straight from last year's successful mini-series, **HAWK & DOVE** are back together . . . and things will just keep getting weirder from here on in.

Hawk and the new Dove may be a tenuous team, but they'll have to make the best of things as they are launched in mysterious



new directions and deadly new adventures. The question is, which will get them first . . . the bad guys or the dissent between them.

HAWK & DOVE, an ongoing monthly series, is written by Barbara and Karl Kesel (the team who wrote the mini-series), and features art by Greg Guler and Scott Hanna.

HAWK & DOVE . . . battling evil together.

Sort of.

ADVENTURE UNDER THE HIGH SEAS WITH *AQUAMAN*

Last month, DC presented THE LEGEND OF AQUAMAN #1, a one-shot special that revealed the history of one of DC's great heroes.

This month, the legend continues in **AQUAMAN #1,** the first issue of a mini-series that delves deeper into the mind of the man long known as the King of the Seven Seas.

AQUAMAN has faced many challenges in his long career, but none greater than this as the undersea kingdom of Atlantis comes under siege by unknown captors and Atlantean mercenaries. AQUAMAN is himself taken prisoner by these same revolutionaries and now he must save himself as well as the aquatic land of his ancestors.

AQUAMAN is a five-issue mini-series, featuring plot and layouts by Keith Giffen, script by Robert Loren Fleming, and pencils by Curt Swan (the trio behind THE LEGEND OF AQUAMAN special), with inks by Al Vey. The cover is painted by Dave DeVries.

AQUAMAN . . . this time, he's in it way over his head.

CELEBRATE 50 YEARS WITH *THE BATMAN*

Fifty years ago, THE BATMAN made his debut in the pages of DETECTIVE COMICS #27.

Now comes **DETECTIVE COMICS #600,** the culmination of 50 years of the Darknight Detective's adventures and the culmination of the three-part tale that began in DETECTIVE COMICS #598.

THE BATMAN must finally confront the evil that he is responsible for creating . . . as well as the personal demons that have haunted him since that fateful day in Gotham City's Crime Alley. It was then that the seeds of The Batman persona were planted in the mind of young Bruce Wayne. Can he defeat this

menace and end the evil he's spawned . . . or will he be forced to abandon his crime-fighting career forever?

DETECTIVE COMICS #600 is written by Sam Hamm (writer of the screenplay for the upcoming Warner Bros. BATMAN film), with art by Denys Cowan and Dick Giordano. This 80-page, squarebound 50th Anniversary celebration issue also features a special homage to THE BATMAN by a host of writers and artists.

DETECTIVE COMICS #600 . . . celebrating THE BATMAN'S *first* fifty years and offering a hint of what the *next* fifty years will hold.

Paul Kupperberg, Writer
Peggy May, Editor
Veronica Carlin, Designer

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Printed in Canada

SUPERMAN & GREEN ARROW IN TRADE PAPERBACKS

One classic collection and a tale that helped redefine a classic hero are proudly re-presented this month by DC in deluxe trade paperback editions.

First up is the trade paperback edition of **THE GREATEST SUPERMAN STORIES EVER TOLD,** a collection of 18 of the best SUPERMAN stories from his first 50 years. The hardcover edition was originally published in 1987 as part of the Man of Steel's grand 50th Anniversary celebration.

Now this 336-page collection is in softcover, with all the stories of the hardcover original, featuring work by such talents as Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster, Wayne Boring, Curt Swan, Murphy Anderson, Jack Kirby, Denny O'Neil, Alan Moore, Dave Gibbons, John Byrne, and others. Check out what made Superman the hero we know and love today. It's the perfect way to head into the *next* fifty years.

Another great hero from DC's past came into the present in the pages of GREEN ARROW: THE LONGBOW HUNTERS, the bestselling three-book Prestige Format mini-series that redefined the Emerald Archer and launched him in his own ongoing monthly series.

Now Mike Grell's landmark series is brought together under one set of covers for the first time in the **GREEN ARROW: THE LONGBOW HUNTERS** Trade Paperback edition, complete with the original covers to the Prestige Format series, an introduction by editor Mike Gold, and a new wrap-around cover painted by Grell.

If you missed either of these classics the first time around, here's your chance to get in on all the history, action, and excitement in brand-new editions.

Who knows when you'll get another chance?

FROM • THE EDITOR

Dear Peggy,

I have a couple of questions to ask, if I may. They are:

i) How does the person-in-charge choose which title would be a mini-series, regular series or a direct sales title only?

ii) Why are some titles put in the direct sales market?

iii) How do you guys and girls tell how well a comic is selling?

Sincerely,

Thaddaeus Kong
P.O. Box 1330
98008 Miri, Sarawak
MALAYSIA

Dear Thaddaeus:

Though Vice President-Editorial Dick Giordano is ultimately responsible for mini-series/regular series decisions, it is the DC Editors working closely with their creative teams who make the choice. Together they decide how best to tell the story they have in mind. Sometimes, a story idea lends itself to regular monthly issues; other times, a story works best with a beginning, middle, and end. In the early planning stages of a new series, the team works very closely with the editor to make those determinations—and, if a limited series seems best, deciding how many issues it will take to tell the story. No one imposes restrictions on a series. The series requirements kind of emerge as the team works together on defining the concept and actually working on the books.

The direct sales decision is very different. That's usually not an editorial decision, but is more of a business decision. Will the newsstand reader—who is generally a younger reader and more of an impulse buyer—be interested? Will a major chain bookstore buyer be willing to make a long-term commitment to carrying a new series or title? Is this clearly a book/issue so steeped in DC continuity that only a regular comic book reader will understand it? Is the "package" too expensive for the impulse buyer at the newsstand? (i.e., Prestige Format and similarly designed items may be deemed too expensive to sell briskly in a newsstand environment). Among the folks gathered to make this decision at DC Comics—with the help of opinions from the editorial staff—are Vice President-Sales and Marketing Bruce Bristow, Executive Vice President Paul Levitz, and Circulation Director Matt Ragone.

And how do we tell how well a title is selling? You'd think we'd be able to answer that question simply. But again, the indicators are not so simple. We know how many books are ordered in the direct sales market—but that doesn't tell us how well the book *actually* sells. For all we know, the 30 kajillion copies of DC IS THE BEST COMIC BOOK COMPANY #1 that the distributors bought for comic book stores are just sitting on the shelves, unsold. We have a better idea of what sells on the newsstand—because those guys send back unsold copies to us after about three months.

As you read this, we will have just finished our annual sales meeting with our direct-only distributors. That's our opportunity to talk about the exciting upcoming projects—and to discuss boring things like business policy. (I usually daydream during the business discussions and ask one of my colleagues to brief me on the highlights.) So you should be reading lots of stories in the "fan" press about what's new and exciting in DC's future. In DIRECT CURRENTS, we stick mostly to those projects coming out soon, but if you read the "People At Work" sections carefully, you'll find hints of future projects there. (I can practically hear the rustle of papers as everyone rushes to his/her collection of DIRECT CURRENTS to re-read the "People At Work" sections from earlier issues.)

See ya,

Peggy

BOOKS SHIPPING IN APRIL

☐ **ACTION COMICS ANNUAL #2**
The Man of Steel's self-imposed exile in space has led him into the clutches of Mongul, who forces him into gladiator-style combat where he must either kill again . . . or be killed. During the battle, Superman makes first contact with an alien priest, who reveals to him secrets of his Kryptonian heritage. Leads into SUPERMAN #32. Written by George Pérez, Roger Stern, and Jerry Ordway, with art by Curt Swan, Mike Mignola, Ordway, Pérez, Brett Breeding, and John Statema. Cover by Pérez and Ordway. $1.75

☐ **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ #6**
Onyx, Vajra, and Kyriani's efforts to recover the Joke/Spell Scroll of the late jester Myrrth have resulted in their being branded gravediggers. Now, lost in another dimension, they must find a way to keep the Scroll out of the hands of the Jester conspirators. Written by Dan Mishkin, with art and cover by Jan Duursema. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #455**
Continued from ACTION COMICS ANNUAL #2 and SUPERMAN #32: Superman has inherited the last known relic of Krypton and, while he's trying to figure out what to make of it, Mongul battles a prison uprising inspired by the Man of Steel. Written by Jerry Ordway, with art by Dan Jurgens and Dennis Janke. Cover by Ordway. $.75

☐ **ANIMAL MAN #12**
Animal Man begins a new chapter in his tumultuous life as his powers and origin are made clear to him and he is able, at last, to reconcile his past with his present. Written by Grant Morrison, with art by Chas Truog and Doug Hazlewood. Cover by Brian Bolland. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **AQUAMAN #1**
(of a 5-issue mini-series)
Following up last month's LEGEND OF AQUAMAN SPECIAL, the King of the Seven Seas must contend with the state of siege that grips the underwater realm of Atlantis as he is taken prisoner by a group of unknown captors and Atlantean revolutionaries. Written by Keith Giffen and Robert Loren Fleming, with art by Curt Swan and Al Vey. Painted cover by Dave DeVries. $1.00

☐ **THE BATMAN #434**
Part 2 of the 3-part "The Many Deaths of The Batman" saga: Jim Gordon tries to find out who is murdering innocent people and leaving their bodies dressed in Batman costumes . . . and he's determined to do it *without* The Batman's help. Written by John Byrne, with art by Jim Aparo and Mike DeCarlo. Cover by Byrne. $.75

☐ **BATMAN ANNUAL #13**
An innocent man's life is at stake and The Batman has to risk breaking Two-Face out of Arkham Asylum if he hopes to save him. But will Two-Face lead the Darknight Detective to the would-be killer . . . or into an inescapable trap that will spell the end of The Batman? Written by James Owsley and pencilled by Michael Bair. Plus: Who's Who pages, and: "Waiting in the Wings" reveals how Alfred protects Batman's secret identity. Story by Kevin Dooley. Art by Malcolm Jones III. Cover by Bair. $1.75

☐ **BLACKHAWK #4**
Blackhawk's new girlfriend is found murdered . . . and all evidence points to Lady Blackhawk as the guilty party. Written by Martin Pasko, with art by Rick Burchett. Cover by Burchett. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **CAPTAIN ATOM #29**
Now that he's cleared his *true* name of all past charges, Captain Atom finds himself deciding whether he wishes to remain a super-hero. Written by Cary Bates, pencilled by Rafael Kayanan, and inked by Romeo Tanghal. Cover by Pat Broderick. $1.00

☐ **CHECKMATE! #17**
Part 5 of the 11-part "JANUS DIRECTIVE": With their headquarters destroyed, the Knights of Checkmate are being killed off by the mysterious Blackadders as Suicide Squad, Black Thorn, Val Vostok, and the Atom Project continue their search for the power behind the deadly Janus Directive. Continues in FIRESTORM #86. Written by Paul Kupperberg, with art by Steve Erwin and Al Vey. Cover by Art Thibert. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **CHECKMATE! #18**
Part 9 of the 11-part "JANUS DIRECTIVE": The Knights of Checkmate and the Suicide Squad prepare for an all-out assault on the death-dealing Space Ark of Kobra, the force behind the world-dominating scheme known as the Janus Directive. Continues in SUICIDE SQUAD #30. Written by Paul Kupperberg, with art by Steve Erwin, Rick Hoberg, and Al Vey. Cover by Art Thibert. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **COPS™ #12**
Wedding plans go astray as Berserko tries to steal some rice. Wait'll you see the new, meaner Ms. Demeanor, "The Bride of Berserko." Written by Doug Moench, with art by Alan Kupperberg. *(New Format)* $1.00

☐ **DETECTIVE COMICS #600**
The Batman must finally face the evil that he himself has spawned . . . an evil so great that it may cause the Darknight Detective to abandon his crime-fighting career forever. An 80-page anniversary special. Part 3 of a 3-part story. Written by Sam Hamm, with art by Denys Cowan and Dick Giordano. Cover by Cowan. $2.95

☐ **DOC SAVAGE #9**
Doc and his team travel to the Central American city of Hidalgo, the source of Doc's wealth and the home of many of his deepest secrets. Written by Mike W. Barr, with art by Rod Whigham and Steve Montano. Cover Adam Kubert and Andy Kubert. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.75

DOC SAVAGE #9

☐ **DOC SAVAGE ANNUAL #1**
In a tale set in 1936, Doc and his original team must prevent Adolf Hitler from sabotaging the German Olympic Games to give himself an excuse to instigate a world war. Plus, a behind-the-scenes look at the first meetings of Doc and his operatives. Written by Mike W. Barr and pencilled by Gabrielle Morrissette. Painted cover by George Pratt. *(Deluxe Format)* $3.50

☐ **DOCTOR FATE #6**
There's no place like home . . . even for the demon Petey, who makes a crazy trip back home to his native dimension in this issue. Written by J. M. DeMatteis, with art by Shawn McManus and Mark McKenna. Cover by McManus. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE DOOM PATROL #23**
While Lodestone lies comatose, she is kidnapped by Red Jack. The question remains, *who* is he? And what does he want from the Doom Patrol? Written by Grant Morrison, with art and cover by Richard Case and Scott Hanna. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **DRAGONLANCE™ #9**
The return of Riva Silvercrown leads us into the hazardous land of the

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minotaurs, along with Tanis Halfelven and Kitiara (from the *Dragonlance* novels). Written by Dan Mishkin, with art by Dave Simons, Ron Randall, and Randy Elliott. Cover by Randall. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **FIRESTORM #86**
Part 7 of the 11-part "JANUS DIRECTIVE": The Parasite has escaped, confronting the new Firestorm with his greatest challenge yet. Continues in SUICIDE SQUAD #29. Written by John Ostrander, with art and cover by Tom Mandrake. $1.00

☐ **FLASH #27**
It's taken long enough, but the missing Wally West has finally been found by his friends . . . now they just have to return him to normal. Can even Chunk save him now? Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art and cover by Greg LaRocque and Larry Mahlstedt. $1.00

☐ **FLASH ANNUAL #3**
Wally West's Justice League International Boom Tube arrives, but since he's out investigating his roots, his mother breaks out his teleporter manual and discovers a fun way to shop. Plus, a behind-the-scenes visit by Wally and Chunk to JLI headquarters, and Who's Who pages. Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art by John Koch, Don Simpson, Greg LaRocque, Larry Mahlstedt, and others. $1.75

☐ **GAMMARAUDERS™ #5**
Jok Tadsworth and fellow bioborg handlers have the Slugnoids hot on their heels . . . and a biomorphic horror that's part bioborg, part mutated podnoid, and all trouble in front of them. Written by Peter Gillis, with art and cover by Martin King and Dave Cooper. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **GILGAMESH II #3**
(of a 4-book mini-series)
Gilgamesh and Otto face a deadly robotic ninja . . . and only one of them will survive "Twilight Blood." Written and drawn by Jim Starlin, with color by Steve Oliff. Cover by Starlin. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Prestige Format.)* $3.95

☐ **THE GREATEST SUPERMAN STORIES EVER TOLD Trade Paperback**
If you missed the hardcover edition of this sold-out 1987 collection, you won't want to miss this trade paperback edition of The Greatest Superman Stories Ever Told. This 336-page volume features 18 classic tales from the Man of Steel's first 50 years, including stories by Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster, Wayne Boring, Curt Swan, John Byrne, and others. $15.95

☐ **GREEN ARROW #19**
It was just an accident . . . a deadly accident that forces the authorities to question Green Arrow's methods even as Ollie Queen's life begins to fall apart around him. Written by Mike Grell, with art and cover by Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.25

☐ **GREEN ARROW: THE LONGBOW HUNTERS Trade Paperback**
Mike Grell's bestselling three-issue Prestige Format mini-series is reprinted in one 160-page trade paperback volume. The story that redefined the Emerald Archer is re-presented with its original covers, an introduction by editor Mike Gold, and a new wrap-around cover painted by Grell. *(Suggested for Mature Readers)* $12.95

☐ **HAWK & DOVE #1**
Hawk and Dove return, fresh from the pages of last year's mini-series. The tenuous team is launched in mysterious new directions and deadly new adventures. Written by Barbara and Karl Kesel, with art by Greg Guler and Scott Hanna. Cover by Guler and Hanna. $1.00

☐ **HAYWIRE #10**
Haywire and White Lotus are developing quite the relationship . . . one that could well be cut short by the Black Dragon Brotherhood and the New Order's attempts to crush him. Written by Michael Fleisher, with art by Vince Giarrano and José Marzan Jr. Cover by Giarrano and Kyle Baker. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **HELLBLAZER #19**
The mysterious life and death of the "Broken Man," and what does this all mean to Constantine? Written by Jamie Delano, with art by Mark Buckingham and Alfredo Alcala. Painted cover by Dave McKean. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **HERO HOTLINE #3**
(of a 6-issue mini-series)
The Hotline's in trouble up to its collective neck as the team battles the chaos-causing super-villain Snafu at the Stock Exchange; Diamondette opens Pandora's Box on live TV; the heroes search for the woman who *might* have been kidnapped by aliens . . . and Mr. Muscle is framed for murder. Written by Bob Rozakis, with art by Stephen DeStefano and Kurt Schaffenberger. Cover by DeStefano and Karl Kesel. *(New Format)* $1.75

☐ **THE HUNTRESS #3**
Who is responsible for the murder of Helena's father? The trail leads The Huntress to La Bruja, a witch who rules her Manhattan voodoo cult through fear. Written by Joey Cavalieri, with art and cover by Joe Staton and Bruce Patterson. $1.00

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE EUROPE #3**
Power Girl, The Flash, and the Elongated Man pay a visit to the old Global Guardians Dome and meet Jack O'Lantern. The explosive results have the French hating the JLE even more. Plotted by Keith Giffen, with script by J.M. DeMatteis and art by Bart Sears and Joe Rubinstein $.75

JUSTICE LEAGUE EUROPE #3

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL #27**
Fire, a.k.a. the Green Flame, discovers that her powers are far greater than either she or the JLI ever suspected. Written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art and cover by Ty Templeton and Joe Rubinstein. $.75

☐ **L.E.G.I.O.N. '89 #5**
Dox's plans for an intergalactic police force come together while the team learns more about Garryn Bek's mysterious life on Cairn. Written by Keith Giffen and Alan Grant, with art by Barry Kitson and Mark McKenna. Cover by Kevin Maguire and Al Gordon. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #61**
Part 2 of the 4-part "Magic Wars" tale: Magic runs rampant over Earth as the forces of science begin to fail . . . and without technology, how will Mon-El survive? Written by Paul Levitz, with art by Keith Giffen and Al Gordon. Cover by Steve Lightle. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.75

☐ **MANHUNTER #14**
Part 6 of the 11-part "JANUS DIRECTIVE": Manhunter gets involved in the confusing and deadly events of the Janus Directive when the Suicide Squad's Amanda Waller shows up on his doorstep with a very scary story. Written by John Ostrander and Kim Yale, with art by Doug Rice and Pablo Marcos. Cover by Rice. $1.00

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☐ **MISTER MIRACLE #5**
It's Mister Miracle, Big Barda, Highfather, and The Forever People versus The Dark . . . and it doesn't seem that the assembled heroes stand a chance. Written by J.M. DeMatteis, with art and cover by Ian Gibson. $1.00

☐ **THE NEW GODS #4**
Orion, Lightray, Eve Donner, and Forager find themselves drawn to a renegade Apokolyptian insect colony in Nevada . . . founded on the site of an unstable nuclear missile depot. Written by Jim Starlin, with art by Paris Cullins and Bob Lewis. Cover by Cullins and P. Craig Russell. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE NEW GUARDIANS #9**
The team breaks into Janwillem's stronghold to rescue Tom Kalmaku and his wife Terga. Although they find help from an unexpected quarter, they also find death! Be prepared for a double-shocker ending. Written by Cary Bates, with art by Joe Staton and Mark Farmer. *(New Format)* $1.25

☐ **THE NEW TITANS #56**
Danny Chase, newly fired from the Titans, breaks into CBI headquarters to find clues to the whereabouts of his missing parents, who are caught up in the Janus Directive plot. Written by Marv Wolfman, with art by George Pérez and Romeo Tanghal. Cover by Pérez. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.75

☐ **THE PHANTOM #3**
The Ghost Who Walks goes undercover with the members of his Jungle Patrol to crack a ring of modern-day pirates . . . the drug runners infesting the shores of Africa. Written by Mark Verheiden, with art and cover by Luke McDonnell. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE POWER OF THE ATOM #13**
The "doctor" is in . . . literally, as the Atom is called upon to perform some very delicate brain surgery on one of Edg's victims—from the *inside*. Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art and cover by Graham Nolan and K.S. Wilson. $1.00

☐ **THE QUESTION #28**
With Myra on the mend, Hub City is up for grabs by differing neighborhood factions who have started taking the law into their own hands. That is, until Lady Shiva shows up . . . offering her sword for hire. Written by Dennis O'Neil, with art and cover by Denys Cowan and Malcolm Jones III. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format.)* $1.75

☐ **SANDMAN #6**
Sandman lies helpless, unable to stop Doctor Destiny as he unleashes nightmares and madness upon the world. Written by Neil Gaiman, with art by Mike Dringenberg and Malcolm Jones III. Painted cover by Dave McKean. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **SECRET ORIGINS #41**
The second Flash's Rogues' Gallery gets together for a final felonious mission, wherein we learn the secret origins of Captain Cold, Heat Wave, Pied Piper, Trickster, and Weather Wizard. Written by Dan Mishkin and Gary Cohn, with art by Don Simpson, Howard Simpson, Trevor VonEeden, Paris Cullins, and others. Cover by Mike Mignola. $1.50

☐ **SECRET ORIGINS ANNUAL #3**
The history of the Teen Titans, from their beginnings as a team of three teen sidekicks to today. The New Titans co-creator George Pérez provides the team's history in this 66-page tale, as illustrated by Kevin Maguire, Colleen Doran, Dick Giordano, Dave Cockrum, Michael Bair, Tom Grummett, Irv Novick, and others. Plus, Who's Who in the old Titans, by Pérez. Cover by Pérez. $2.95

☐ **SKREEMER #1**
(of a 6-issue mini-series)
In the devastated world of the near future, the "Era of the Gangs" returns as Depression-era gangsters enter the world of Skreemer, Written by Pete Milligan, with art and cover by Brett Ewins. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format.)* $2.00

☐ **SPECTRE #26**
"The Ghost in the Machine" story continues as a serial killer gets his jollies by accessing a super-computer that controls the world's nuclear arsenal. Written by Doug Moench, with art by Tom Artis and Robbie Busch. Cover by Artis. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **STARMAN #11**
The kid gloves are off as Starman takes on the Power Elite and the mysterious Hutchings Institute. Written by Roger Stern, with art by Tom Lyle and Bob Smith. Cover by Lyle. $1.00

☐ **SUICIDE SQUAD #28**
Part 4 of the 11-part "JANUS DIRECTIVE": Major Force is on the rampage . . . and it's up to the Suicide Squad to stop him. Plus, the villain *behind* the Janus Directive is revealed. Continues in CHECKMATE! #17. Written by John Ostrander and Kim Yale, with art by John K. Snyder III and Karl Kesel. Cover by Snyder and Kesel. $1.00

☐ **SUICIDE SQUAD #29**
Part 8 of the 11-part "JANUS DIRECTIVE": The purpose behind the Space Ark is revealed as Belle Reve is trashed by Major Force and all the pieces of the mysterious Janus Directive start to come together as Manhunter, Nightshade, and the new Firestorm enter the fray. Continues in CHECKMATE! #18. Written by John Ostrander and Kim Yale, with art by John K. Snyder III and Pablo Marcos. Cover by Karl Kesel. $1.00

☐ **SUPERMAN #32**
Superman pays the ultimate price for *not* killing his nemesis from ACTION COMICS ANNUAL #2. Meanwhile, on Earth, Matrix (the ex-Supergirl) heads for Metropolis. Written by Roger Stern, with art and cover by Kerry Gammill and Dennis Janke. $.75

☐ **SWAMP THING #87**
Swamp Thing's journey through time continues as he finds himself in the age of Camelot, where he meets the Demon and the other DC heroes of the Middle Ages. Written by Rick Veitch with art by Tom Yeates. Cover by Veitch. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER #7**
(of a 12-issue maxi-series)
The nuclear bombs will start falling within hours unless the Unknown Soldier can force his way into a heavily guarded bunker in Tripoli and persuade a terrorist to reveal his most cherished secret. Written by James Owsley, with art and cover by Phil Gascoine. *(Suggested for Mature Readers, New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **WASTELAND #18**
Our forays into the wild and wacky world of the Wasteland come to an end with the final issue of the wildest anthology title ever to hit a comics shop shelf. A book-length story, written by John Ostrander and Del Close, with art by Donald Simpson, William Messner-Loebs, and Bill Wray. Cover by Wray. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format.)* $2.00

☐ **WONDER WOMAN #31**
Diana goes hand against claw with the deadly Cheetah to settle their differences . . . once and for all. Written by George Pérez, with art by Chris Marrinan and Will Blyberg. Cover by Pérez. $1.00

☐ **YOUNG ALL-STARS #26**
Tigress and "Iron" Munro are gone . . . and that could spell the end for the Young All-Stars as well. Written by Roy and Dann Thomas and pencilled by Ron Harris. Cover by Harris. *(New Format)* $1.75

people at WORK

Mike Grell

Some people write. Others draw. Only a few individuals combine both talents, and fewer still have shown the range and imagination of Mike Grell in the execution of their craft.

"I was born in Iron Mountain, Michigan," Mike tells us, "because that was the nearest hospital to my hometown of Florence, Wisconsin, in 1947.

"I drew from the time I was able to hold a pencil," Mike recalls. "Sunday morning comic strips were a family ritual, evening comic strips were the same thing. My dad's favorite was always Alley Oop. I think my mom's favorites were Blondie and Prince Valiant. In fact, she was the one who really introduced me to Prince Valiant when I was just a little kid. Being quite a talented artist herself, she was attracted by the drawing."

Mike began following comic books as well. "The first comic I learned to recognize and appreciate was Magnus Robot Fighter. The artist was Russ Manning."

But as far as choosing comics as a career, Mike had other plans. "I wanted to be an architect in the worst way. Actually, first I wanted to be a lumberjack, just like my old man. But I spent one summer in the woods and found out how hard the old boy was working and I decided that wasn't for me. So I figured I was going to be an architect and work on another end of the lumber industry. But I couldn't hack the math, I just could not handle it. In those days we didn't have calculators, we just had fingers and toes.

"I decided commercial art was the way to go and I attended the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay for a year in an attempt to get some sort of art training, but I was not satisfied with the program there, so I dropped out. I worked for a year trying to earn enough to transfer into a private art school when Uncle Sam caught up with me and I won my first lottery. I got to see the Alamo and I got to see the Mississippi River as viewed from Arkansas, and then I got a free tour of Southeast Asia, but then a lot of people got that tour.

"I was an illustrator in the Air Force. They had a fairly interesting program where I learned a lot about graphic arts and things that have stood me in good stead. But in basic training I met a fellow who was an aspiring cartoonist, and he informed me that I should give up the idea of being a commercial artist and become a cartoonist instead. He told me a cartoonist only works two days a week and earns a million dollars a year. Instantly I said, hey, this is for me. I've been in this business for over fifteen years now and the way I figure it, someone owes me near fifteen million dollars and about nine and a half years off.

"I began pursuing cartooning as a future career and I enrolled in the Famous Artists School correspondence course, which was really a very good course. It's too bad it's not offered anymore; it had an excellent curricu-

lum. It was created by people like Milton Caniff and Al Capp, and you can't go too far wrong with that.

"Then a fellow from the states was transferred over, and he was a comics fan. Among the comics he brought with him was GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW, by Denny O'Neil, Neal Adams, and Dick Giordano, and it blew me away. Like most people at that stage, I'd gotten away from comic books around the same time I got interested in girls, so I was real surprised to find out that there had been changes in the industry.

"When I took a look at the artwork in GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW, I decided right on the spot that that was the kind of work I wanted to do. But I had no intention at all of getting into comic books. I was a comic strip fan from the word go and I'd tried to develop a comic strip when I was in Saigon. When I got back to the States I made an effort to peddle it, but it didn't go anywhere. It was called Iron Mike, but all it got me was a nickname that's stayed with me to this day.

"So I promptly enrolled myself in the Chicago Academy of Fine Art to study cartooning there. While I was there, I worked at another comic strip, which again didn't get off the ground. It was called Savage Empire and later on, when I started work for DC Comics, I changed the characters around, changed the setting around, rewrote the story some and it became the WARLORD."

But Mike did manage to break into the world of the comic strip rather early in his career. "While I was attending school in Chicago I was moonlighting as a commercial artist for a studio and working for Dale Messick, assisting her on the Brenda Starr comic strip.

"Then, in the summer of 1973 I packed up my portfolio and went to the New York comics convention where I expected to be inundated with offers to sell my comic strip. But I found out that comics conventions had almost *nothing* to do with comic strips at all. But I did meet Allan Asherman, who at the time was Joe Kubert's editorial assistant, and Irv Novick. They both took a look at my portfolio and Irv told me in no uncertain terms to get my carcass up to Julie Schwartz's office.

"I walked in with my prepared encyclopedia salesman speech, 'Good afternoon, Mr. Schwartz, I'm here to offer you this deluxe volume set of Encyclopedia Brittanica complete with yearbook, etc. etc.'

"Apparently Julie had been through this mill several million times before, because when Julie walked in and I said, 'Good afternoon, Mr. Schwartz . . .' and he said 'What the hell makes you think you can draw comics?' I tossed my portfolio on his desk and said take a look and you tell me. I walked out half an hour later with a script in my hand, for 'As the Undersea City Sleeps' by Steve Skeates. Steve was into alliteration. It was an Aquaman story that appeared as a back-up feature in ADVENTURE COMICS #435.

"Julie called in Joe Orlando who looked at my work and somewhere in all that garbage he saw a budding talent that could be salvaged or nurtured or something like that. Joe was my mentor for a long time. I would bring a story in and Joe would sit down and go over it with me, practically panel by panel. It was a very interesting, very educational period.

"As luck would have it, the very week I walked in happened to be the week that Dave Cockrum walked *out* as the artist on the LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES. Joe Orlando called me up and asked if I would *mind* if he recommended me and I said no, no, I want a book."

Mike was also something of a trailblazer in the realm of independent publishers. "I was the first pro to sign a contract with an independent pubisher. I was also doing the Tarzan comic strip in the Sunday papers and developing SABLE. It was impractical staying with that heavy a workload. After that came SABLE for First Comics, which I stayed on for 53 issues."

But Mike was destined to return to DC when he received an offer he couldn't refuse. "Mike Gold called me up and asked me if there was any character at DC that I was interested enough in to consider coming back to work for the company.

"Green Arrow had always been my favorite character, the one that got me interested in comics in the first place. And he said, 'Think about this: Green Arrow as an urban hunter.' And I said, Yeah. That was it. From that moment on, it wasn't a question of *if* I was interested in doing it, it was a question of how long it would take me to get it done." The result of this was, of course, GREEN ARROW: THE LONGBOW HUNTERS, the three-part Prestige Format mini-series which appears this month as a trade paperback edition, as well as having launched the current monthly GREEN ARROW series.

"I enjoy doing the writing. The annoying part about it is that it takes time away from my drawing. And I have to admit that while I have trouble separating the two . . . if someone were to ask me if I'm a writer or an artist, I usually tell them I'm a storyteller. I try to tell stories with my art and I certainly tell stories in words as well.

"But I think if I had to give up one or the other, I would probably give up the writing and stay with the drawing simply because in a lot of ways it's a bit more satisfying, but not necessarily more challenging. I've never been one who could just sit down and automatically turn out masterwork. Everything I've ever done, I've worked at.

"It's paid off and it's been worth it, but it has all been work."

TEEN TITANS®

From the archives of the DC Comics Library, we bring you the cover of TEEN TITANS #14 (1968), the story on which this month's SECRET ORIGINS ANNUAL #3 was based.